

**Weekly Status & Information Report:
Week of July 16 - July 20, 2007**

1. Legality of Immigrant Sanctuary Law Reaffirmed: At the direction of the City Council, the City of Takoma Park has released a legal analysis concerning the City's immigrant sanctuary law, which went into effect in 1985. In a memorandum dated July 17, 2007, City Attorney Susan Silber and Assistant City Attorney Kenneth Sigman advised the Takoma Park City Council that "...the sanctuary law is a valid law that is not superceded by state or federal statute and that it broadly prohibits cooperating with or assisting federal immigration officials with the investigation or arrest of persons accused of immigration violations." Chief Ronald A. Ricucci, who assumed leadership of the Takoma Park Police Department in February 2007, requested the legal analysis. His request was prompted by the inclusion of criminal or civil deportation orders in the National Crime Information Center database, which began in December 2001. Ricucci inquired about the applicability and the legality of the City's immigration sanctuary law. A copy of the July 17, 2007 memorandum from the City Attorney's Office, as well as a news release concerning it, may be found on the City's website, www.takomaparkmd.gov. *(City Manager)*

2. Crosswalk Installation on Philadelphia Avenue (Ward 1): The City has received inquiries concerning the schedule for installing the crosswalks on Philadelphia Avenue following this week's paving work by SHA. The work was to have been done already, but rain delays on other projects affected the subcontractor's schedule. SHA anticipates the crosswalk installation to occur some time during the week of July 23rd. It will be done on the same night time schedule as the paving work. *(City Manager)*

3. Library Sponsors Harry Potter Read-A-Thon: The Library is hosting a "Harry Potter Read-A-Thon" throughout the day on Saturday, July 21. Children and adults are invited to make themselves comfortable in the Children's Room, where we'll play the audio version of the newest book, "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows" from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Note: the audio version runs 21 hours 38 minutes, so we'll only make a start!). The program will open with a ceremonial cutting of a banner that reads "Harry's Here!" Free pizza and drinks will be provided in the Azalea Room for those who have signed up for lunch. From 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Monday, July 30, we'll celebrate the end of the "Harry Potter" series with a party. Participants are invited to come in costume, and we'll have a jeopardy game, fortune-telling, "potions" making, Harry Potter-themed desserts, skits and lots of prizes. Please call the Library at 301-891-7259 to sign up, so we know how many people are coming. *(Library)*

4. Helpful Guide to Montgomery County Government: Montgomery County has recently published "Know Your County," a guide to Montgomery County departments and services. It is available on the County's web site in English, Spanish and Chinese. The English version is at: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/EXEC/kyc/kycenglish070307finwithcover.pdf>. *(Community & Government Liaison)*

5. The Chief in Meetings: On July 17, Chief Ricucci met with Andy Keleman of the Public Safety Citizens Advisory Committee regarding public safety matters. On July 19, the Chief attended the Gangs Press Conference in Montgomery County. On July 20, he attended the New Employee Orientation Luncheon held in the Council Chambers. *(Police)*

6. **Traffic Enforcement:** Officers conducted at least 91 traffic stops this week, which resulted in citations and four vehicle impounds. *(Police)*

7. **Gangs:** Chief Ricucci is meeting with various county officials on their approach to preventing gang problems. This is an approach which includes, but is not limited to, social services, recreation and school. *(Police)*

8. **CSAFE:** On July 18, CSAFE facilitated its regular HEAT Team meeting. Cpl. Tina Smith from Takoma Park Police Department was in attendance. On July 19, a Weed and Seed meeting was held with residents of Langley Park. At the meeting, the Weed and Seed Program was explained to the community. Residents were given the opportunity to provide input on Weed and Seed strategies. Approximately 15 residents attended. The meeting was facilitated by Major Kevin Davis, District 1, Prince George's County Police Department, and Mary Kendall, CSAFE Program Director. Representatives from the Prince George's County Executive Office, Congressman Van Hollen's Office, Community Legal Services, Archdiocese of Washington, Action Langley Park, Maryland Multicultural Youth Center, Division of Parole and Probation and CASA de Maryland were in attendance. The Weed and Seed Grant application is due in September 2007. *(Police)*

9. **New Hampshire Avenue Bus Stop Improvements (Wards 2, 3 and 6):** The City was recently notified that Montgomery County Public Works will be making physical improvements to bus stops along New Hampshire Avenue. The work is scheduled to begin as early as next week. The improvements, including curb ramps and median reconfiguration, will make the stops more accessible, safe and comfortable for transit riders. For more information, please contact David Suls at 301-891-7219. *(Housing and Community Development)*

10. **New Hampshire Avenue Corridor Developers Tour (Wards 2, 3 and 6):** The City's Planning staff hosted a second tour of the New Hampshire Avenue Corridor on Thursday, July 19. The tour, targeted to regional and national developers and financiers, was designed to provide information on the commercial and residential development opportunities available along the corridor. *(Housing and Community Development)*

11. **Tenant Committee on State Legislation Issues to Meet (City-wide):** Tenants who are interested in being a part of an effort to research and propose changes to Maryland's Condominium Conversion law and Real Property law (pertaining to a landlord's right to give a tenant two month's notice to vacate without cause at the end of a one-year lease) should contact Linda Walker at 301- 891-7222. The committee will meet twice during August (meeting dates to be announced) and plans to submit requests for support to the City Council for state legislative changes. *(Housing and Community Development)*

12. **Vacant, Abandoned and Neglected Building Survey (City-wide):** Chike Croslin has joined the Code Enforcement staff as a summer part-time employee. He will be conducting a visual survey of all buildings in the City, recording and rating the condition of each one. Approximately 2,200 building units had been surveyed prior to his employment, and many more will be added to that number before he sets for his freshman year of college. *(Housing and Community Development)*

13. Code Enforcement Courtesy Notice (City-wide): The Code Enforcement Division has developed a new tool to use in addressing property maintenance issues. A courtesy notice/door tag will be left for property owners with minor maintenance code violations, such as overgrown vegetation, trash, peeling paint, etc. The City's goal is to have minor violations abated in a more timely fashion. If the courtesy notice is not successful in gaining compliance, the standard citation process will be used. *(Housing and Community Development)*

14. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Applications Available (City-wide): The City of Takoma Park is accepting proposals for the use of its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Applications are due Monday, August 20, 2007 and are available online at www.takomaparkmd.gov. For more information, please contact Sara Anne Daines at 301-891-7224 or by email at SaraD@takomagov.org. *(Housing and Community Development)*

15. ESOL in Government: City staff hosted a group of students and their teachers from Montgomery Blair High School. The students, mostly ESOL students, are in a special summer program to learn about different levels of government in order to get a jump on the State-required government test they will take. Mayor Porter greeted the students and answered their questions. This was the second group of students to visit this summer. *(Community and Government Liaison)*